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THE GABRIELINO TONGVA TRIBAL COUNCIL
of the
GABRIELINO TONGVA NATION

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Tribal Council

Hon. Martin Alcala
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Tribal General Counsel
Rae Lamothe, Esq.

Sent Via Fax: 562-570-6068

February 14, 2005

Ms. Angela Reynolds, Environmental Officer
City of Long Beach
Department of Planning & Building
333 West Ocean Blvd., 7th Floor
Long Beach, California 90802

Re: Public Comment on 2004 Recirculated Draft E.I.R. / Long Beach Sports Park
State Clearing House No. 1999091108

Dear Ms. Reynolds:

On behalf of the tribal membership of the Gabrielino/ Tongva Nation and our tribal council I am submitting the following comments and recommendations for the Long Beach Sports Park Draft E.I.R.. As the proposed project lies within the traditional tribal territory of this tribal group (a state recognized tribal sovereign) and after careful review of the E.I.R. documents it is warranted to comment on the Cultural Resource Section and subsequent Mitigation Measures for archaeological resources.

Comment 1 : The Draft E.I.R. misleads the public into believing that the indigenous people of this area no longer exist (Regional History, page 4.6-5). The Gabrielino/Tongva are in fact very much alive and well and continue to be actively involved within our tribal communities promoting tribal customs, language, and economic development. We are also very active in safeguarding the cultural resources of our tribe.

Comment 2 : The Draft E.I.R. (Known Archaeological, Historical, or Paleontological Resources, page 4.6-10) states "Based on an archaeological survey in the 1970s, and a project site survey conducted in 1999, it is concluded that there are no known prehistoric resources on the site." This "conclusion" is in error, for at best there can only be an assumption that there are no prehistoric resources on the proposed project.

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Comment 3 : The Draft E.I.R. (Unknown Archaeological, Historical, or Paleontological Resources, page 4.6-12) states the possibility of encountering unknown buried prehistoric archaeological resources during ground disturbing activities and these could be significantly impacted by the proposed project if monitoring and mitigation are not provided. Here I agree, for we are correctly assuming that the possibility remains that cultural deposits can be encountered despite the high amount of ground disturbance from previous activity on the proposed project.

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Comment 4 : It has been the experience of our tribal group that in construction activity such as is proposed for this project the possibility of disturbing our ancestral remains can never be dismissed. Disturbance of Native American burials is a sacred issue to our tribe and we suggest that all avenues have been exhausted to ensure their protection and avoidance.

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Recommendation 1 : Advise the consultants responsible for preparing this Draft E.I.R. that the ethnographic information for the Gabrielino/Tongva needs to be corrected in the Final E.I.R.. The culture and living history of our tribal group deserves much more credit than was given.

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Recommendation 2 : The mitigation measures outlined in the Draft E.I.R. address the need for adequate archaeological monitoring during ground disturbing activity but fails to include a Native American monitoring component. Due to the proximity of two previously recorded archaeological sites (LAN-838 and LAN-839) and the public concern of the possibility of a prehistoric village area (Ahwaanga) along with the concerns expressed of the sacredness of the project area it is recommended that a Native American monitoring component be included for ground disturbing activity. This Native American monitoring component should be included in the Final E.I.R..


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Recommendation 3 : Since the proposed project lies within the traditional tribal territory of this tribal group it is recommended that any Native American monitors be selected by this tribal council. The Gabrielino/Tongva Tribal Council located in Santa Monica has qualified and properly insured personnel to accomplish this task.

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Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. (909) 262-9351.

Sincerely,


Samuel H. Dunlap
Tribal Secretary

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O-5-1

This comment introduces comments that follow. The comment does not contain any substantive statements or questions about the Draft EIR or the analysis therein. Therefore, no further response is necessary.

O-5-2

The City acknowledges, and the Draft EIR does not dispute, the existence of living Gabrielino/Tongva peoples, and recognizes their independence and sovereignty.

O-5-3

This comment pertains to the definition of the word “conclusion” in the context of the Cultural Resources section (Section 4.6) of the Draft EIR. The cultural resource professionals who conducted the compliance work for the project concluded, based on their field work and the results of the records search, that there were no cultural resources on site. This conclusion contains the exception that buried, and hence unknown, sites may be present within the project site. However, there is no physical evidence of any archaeological resources within the project limits.

O-5-4

This comment concurs with the statement of the Draft EIR that buried unknown resources could be present in the project site. The City acknowledges the Tribal Council’s concurrence.

O-5-5

This comment is a statement of concern and a request that “all avenues [be] exhausted to ensure their [Native American burials] protection and avoidance.” Completion of a records search and a thorough pedestrian survey identified no evidence of archaeological resources, which represents the good faith attempt to identify these resources. Human remains and funerary objects, if found as a result of monitoring, would be handled consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.6.6. Briefly restated, this would involve notification of the Coroner, contact by the Coroner with the NAHC, designation of an MLD by the NAHC, and coordination with the MLD on the disposition of the materials.

O-5-6

The comment requests that ethnographic information about the Gabrielino/Tongva be given greater significance in the Final EIR. The City acknowledges, and the Draft EIR does not dispute, the existence of living Gabrielino/Tongva peoples, and recognizes their independence and sovereignty.

O-5-7

This comment recommends that a Native American monitoring component be included for ground-disturbing activity. Although a Native American Monitor is not required, the City of Long Beach will have a Native American Monitor on site during ground-disturbing activity. This comment does not

contain any substantive statements or questions about the environmental analysis in the EIR, and no further response is necessary.

O-5-8

This comment requests that, if Native American monitors are used, the monitors be drawn from the specific group authoring the letter. The City's customary practice is to obtain a list of tribal people from the NAHC and to use the list to identify the appropriate monitoring group. This comment does not contain any substantive statements or questions about the environmental analysis in the EIR, and no further response is necessary.